

Amendments to the Specification:

Please replace the paragraph bridging pages 27 and 28 of the specification with the following rewritten paragraph:

---As used herein, the term “nucleic acid molecule” is intended to include DNA molecules (e.g. mRNA) and analogs of the DNA or RNA generated using nucleotide analogs. The nucleic acid molecule can be single-stranded or double-stranded, but preferably is double-stranded DNA. The nucleotide sequences encoding the wild-type human α L and α M polypeptides are set forth as SEQ ID NO:1 (GenBank Accession No. NM_002209) and SEQ ID NO:3 (Genbank Accession No. J03925), respectively. The isolated nucleic acid molecules of the present invention include the nucleotide sequences of SEQ ID NO:1 and SEQ ID NO:3, which encode the modified amino acids sequences of the α L and α M mutants described herein, *e.g.* identified below in Table 9. Table 9 illustrates the specific nucleotide residues which are altered to result in the modified α L and α M mutants as described herein. For example, the K287C/K294C mutant is a modified α L polypeptide, wherein there is a change in the amino acid sequence of (SEQ ID NO:2) such that the amino acid residues 287 and 294 are substitute with cysteine residues. The corresponding wild-type nucleotide sequence, SEQ ID NO:1, is modified at nucleotide residues 1033-1024 and ~~1143-1145~~ 1043-1045, respectively. Therefore, as shown in Table 9, for the α L K287C/K294C mutant at amino acid K287, the corresponding nucleotide residues in the wild-type α L nucleic acid sequence (SEQ ID NO:1), nucleotide residues 1022-1024, are modified from “aaa” to “tgt”. Note that SEQ ID NO:2 and SEQ ID NO: 4 are the amino acid sequences of the precursor proteins, while the numbering system used herein is based on the mature protein. The precursor protein for SEQ ID NO:2 includes 25 additional amino acids, as compared with the mature protein, while the precursor protein for SEQ ID NO:4 includes 16 additional amino acids, as compared to the mature protein. The additional amino acids for each protein reside at the beginning of the respective sequences.